



MITT ROMNEY
GOVERNOR

KERRY HEALEY
LT. GOVERNOR

EDWARD A. FLYNN
SECRETARY

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Public Safety
Department of Fire Services
P.O. Box 1025 ~ State Road

Stow, Massachusetts 01775

(978) 567~3100 Fax: (978) 567~3121



STEPHEN D. COAN
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

THOMAS P. LEONARD
DEPUTY STATE FIRE MARSHAL

For Immediate Release:

Contact: Jennifer Mieth, (978) 567-3381
www.mass.gov/dfs

State Fire Marshal Offers Halloween Safety Tips

State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan today issued a safety warning to adults whose children plan to go “trick-or-treating” this Halloween. “This is holiday where children are at risk for serious burn injuries because we traditionally use candles,” said Coan.

The Fire Marshal strongly advised parents to make sure costumes, masks, wigs and beards are labeled “flame resistant”. Coan added that “even though this material is labeled flame resistant, it can still catch fire. We should all take special care when near candles or other sources of ignition.”

Halloween Safety Tips

Costumes

- Children should carry a flashlight and their costumes should be bright-colored or have reflective tape to highlight them.
- Be sure all parts of the costume are labeled flame retardant.
- Costumes should not have trailing material or tails long enough to cause falls.
- Pointed objects such as swords and devils' forks should be made of soft material.
- If your child wears a mask instead of make-up on their face, double check that the eye holes are large enough to see through clearly.
- Children should wear sturdy shoes and temperature appropriate clothing underneath their costumes.

Decorations

- Use a small flashlight in pumpkins instead of a candle.
- Only use flame-proof crepe paper.
- Keep dried leaves and cornstalks away from all flames and heat sources.

Fireworks

Firecrackers, cherry bombs, and party poppers cause many injuries and fires on Halloween. These are dangerous and should not be used by children, teens or adults. Besides the physical danger and the fire hazards involved, fireworks are illegal in Massachusetts.

Checking Treats

- Throw out anything that appears tampered with, homemade foods or home-packaged foods unless you are certain of the source.
- Inspect fruit closely and takeaway treats that may not be age appropriate. Young children may choke on things like hard candy or peanuts.

Trick-or-Treaters

Make sure your own home is well-lit and that there is a clear path to your door. Bicycles and lawn furniture can trip youngsters in the dark.

Trick-or-Treating

- Smaller children should always be with an adult. It's best to take little ones out early.
- If older children are going out without you, go over the ground rules first!
- Know what neighborhoods they will be in.
- Don't allow them in areas with which you are not completely comfortable.
- Have the children stay in a group.
- Let them know what time to be home.
- Give them change to use the telephone if necessary.

Instruct children to:

- Use sidewalks.
- Cross only at the corners; never dart out between parked cars.
- Cover one side of the street at a time, no criss-crossing.
- Never go inside someone's home unless it is a friend's.
- Never accept a ride in a car.
- Only approach houses where the outside lights are on as a signal of welcome.
- Bring their bags home to be checked by an adult before eating a single treat.

Change Your Clock, Change Your Battery

Each year around Halloween, we turn the clocks back one hour. This is a good time to also change the batteries in your smoke detectors. This year, buy fresh batteries for your smoke alarms along with your Halloween candy. State Fire Marshal Stephen D. Coan suggests that "while you are at the store picking up some treats for the children, pick up something especially important for you and your entire household, new batteries for your smoke alarms." Remember that on Sunday, October 31, when you *Change Your Clocks, Change Your Batteries*.

For more fire safety information please call the toll-free Public Education Hotline at 1-9NO-FIRE (1-877-966-3473) or look online at the Department of Fire Services Web page at www.mass.gov/dfs.